

RESOLUTION NO. (2015) 2277

A RESOLUTION STATING THE TOWN OF GARNER TOWN COUNCIL'S POSITION REGARDING
ALIGNMENT OF TRIANGLE EXPRESWAY SOUTHEAST EXTENSION

WHEREAS, the proposed 540 Triangle Expressway has been a fundamental transportation facility underpinning for more than 20 years of local land use and transportation decisions of the Town of Garner and other local governments of Wake County;

WHEREAS, the Town of Garner historically has utilized the protected 540 corridor proposed in earlier designs to make key planning decisions for both existing and future development in Garner; and

WHEREAS, any change in plans to relocate this roadway away from its previously designated location (orange route) will have an adverse impact on the Garner community; and

WHEREAS, the "red" route shown on **2015 Corridor Public Hearing Maps** with a course north of Lake Benson is a very poor land use decision that will cause tremendous disruption to existing homes and businesses in Garner; and

WHEREAS, numerous Garner homeowners and landowners have relied upon the protected corridor route (orange) for many years as they have made investment decisions. A change to the planned route will be burdensome, chaotic, and unfair; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Town of Garner would like to see the Triangle Expressway Southeast Extension constructed, however, the Town is fundamentally opposed to the "red route" north of Lake Benson; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Council supports use of the original protected corridor design as illustrated in orange on the 2015 Corridor Public Hearing Maps as the preferred choice for the development and construction of the I-540 Triangle Expressway Southeast Extension.

Adopted this 15th day of December 2015.



ATTEST:

Stella Gibson, Interim Town Clerk

Ronnie S. Williams, Mayor



Ronnie S. Williams
MAYOR

Town of Garner

900 7th Avenue • Garner, North Carolina 27529
Phone (919) 772-4688 • Fax (919) 662-8874 • www.GarnerNC.gov



December 16, 2015

Eric Midkiff, P.E.
Project Development - Western Region
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Complete 540 Triangle Expressway Southeast Extension Study
Town of Garner Comments

Dear Mr. Midkiff:

This letter presents an official list of the Town of Garner concerns regarding the above referenced matter. The following points are major reasons why the Town of Garner believes why the North Carolina Department of Transportation should remove the red and lilac corridors from further study.

1. **The red corridor is extremely detrimental to current and future parks and recreation facilities in the Town of Garner.**

The red corridor impacts the northern edge of the recently opened **White Deer Nature Park**, the Town's first LEED Gold certified facility. This is a passive park facility with an environmental education center, trails, picnic shelters, and playgrounds.

The red corridor will also obstruct and wipe out a portion of the **South Garner Greenway** leading from Timber Drive to **White Deer Park**. This greenway facility connects 4.2 miles of a neighborhood loop sidewalk in central Garner with a 2.8 mile greenway trail through **White Deer and Lake Benson Parks**. The red corridor completely severs the pedestrian connection between these parks and the 4.2 mile sidewalk loop serving hundreds of homes in central Garner.

The red route obliterates and eliminates **George W. Bryan Nature Park**. Bryan Nature Park is a 20-acre nature park facility located east of Highway 50 near the South Creek neighborhood.

The red corridor will also impede and negatively impact the Town's 35-acre **Timber Drive Park property**, designated as a future site of an aquatics facility and/or community center.

The Triangle Area YMCA owns a tract of land on Aversboro Road that will be the location of a new Poole Family YMCA. The plans have been submitted to the Town for review. Construction is planned to begin in 2016. The red corridor will impact this property's availability for use as a community recreation facility.

2. The red corridor will disrupt long-range and orderly growth in areas designated for future development by the Town's Comprehensive Growth Plan.

The Town's major future growth area is generally referred to as the White Oak area. It lies south of US 70, west of I-40, east of Highway 50, and north of Clifford Road. Significant infrastructure investment and planning decisions have been made to promote future growth and development in this area. Capital investments of over 3 million dollars have been made in roads, major water lines, and sewer trunk lines in this portion of the community to support future development. Tremendous uncertainty exists if the red corridor effectively bisects this future growth district.

The Town's Comprehensive Growth Plan and the 2010 Garner Transportation Plan both recommend a new interchange at I-40 and White Oak Road to serve an emerging Regional White Oak Mixed Use Center. The red corridor would likely prevent this future interchange from ever occurring while creating some challenges for future growth in this important section of Town that will require significant additional study if the red corridor is selected.

3. The red corridor severely damages the Town's primary industrial recruitment area.

The red corridor obliterates **Greenfield South Business Park**, one of Garner's premiere locations for jobs and industry. As a result, the red corridor will create a loss of significant tax base and the community will witness the demise of an area that has been programmed for non-residential growth that is vital to the Town.

In 2015, 151 acres of this park was inducted in to the Duke Site Readiness Program. This program helps communities, such as Garner, develop their economic development assets by providing professional assistance and counsel on how to make properties market ready for development. This site has potential to be one of Garner's largest employment centers and will play a key role to a brighter economic future for our community. The Red Route, if chosen, would have a tremendous negative impact on this site rendering the Town's and our partner's efforts in developing one of the largest contiguous sites in Wake County and make it unsuitable for large industrial and commercial development.

There are 26 commercial/industrial lots (developed & vacant) impacted by the red corridor with a total Wake County tax value of over 30 million dollars.

4. The red corridor splits and disconnects the Town of Garner again.

US Highway 70 split the Town of Garner and literally divided the town into two sections in the 1950's. The community has been striving to recover from this poor

planning decision since that time. Garner cannot afford to be divided again by a road as large as the Triangle Expressway. If the orange protected corridor is selected as the preferred route, the Town can naturally grow towards the new expressway in a managed fashion over the next 25-35 years. Deference should be given to wise long-range planning as exemplified in the protected orange corridor route.

5. The red corridor will have negative water quality impacts to Lake Benson.

The red corridor crosses into portions of the critical areas of **Lake Benson** and **Swift Creek**. The corridor is located immediately upstream of Lake Benson and crosses the majority of the tributaries feeding the lake. This location and proximity would increase the likelihood of potential drinking water contamination. Any spill from a roadway disaster would drain directly into Lake Benson. With the completion of the \$90 million **Dempsey Benton Water Treatment Plant**, this lake serves as a substantial potable water supply for the Metro Raleigh area.

Correspondingly, the road construction impact on **Lake Benson** is an area of concern with the red corridor. The aforementioned proximity and drainage flow direction could lead to lake contamination and/or potential reduction in the safe yield of the lake due to potential sedimentation as a result of the construction process.

In addition to the lake itself the red corridor will negatively impact the existing water transmission and distribution infrastructure associated with the new water treatment plant. This is also a concern for the existing wastewater collection infrastructure located in the red corridor.

6. The red corridor fails to provide adequate access to the Clayton Bypass facility.

The red corridor fails to provide efficient and effective transportation by not directly servicing traffic generation from the Clayton, Smithfield, Selma and the eastern Johnston County region.

Pushing traffic via a more northern route as depicted by the red corridor does not accomplish needed goals of accommodating travelers from areas south of Garner that need to travel westward towards Holly Springs, Morrisville and Research Triangle Park.

The red corridor also puts an interchange that would be just over one mile from the existing I-40/US 70 interchange. This would appear to create difficulty for proper traffic circulation and flow for the traveling public.

7. The red corridor will have significant and direct impacts on thirteen (13) Garner neighborhoods.

The following neighborhoods are directly impacted by the red corridor: Lakewood; Heather Hills; Breezeway; Vandora Pines; Camelot; Breezeway West; Breezeway East; Summer's Walk; Van Story Hills; Heather Ridge; Heather Woods, Forest Landing; and the Village at Aversboro.

We estimate approximately 510 residential lots in Garner could be impacted by the red corridor representing a tax value of over \$106,500,000. This represents a significant cost to the Garner community in terms displacement and relocation of numerous families but also a significant impact to our tax base.

8. The following points summarize the Town's concerns regarding the lilac corridor, especially the portions nearest the Garner Town Limits:

- It would remove significant portions of the Town's industrial tax base;
- It causes a large number of residential relocations for persons in the Greater Garner area;
- It traverses directly through a City of Raleigh Wastewater Biosolids facility located just south of the Garner Town Limits;
- It changes land use for a large segment of our Town's future growth area and;
- It fails to connect directly with the Clayton Bypass.

The Town of Garner is fundamentally opposed to both the red and lilac corridors illustrated on the 2015 Corridor Public Hearing Maps. Therefore, the Town strongly requests that both corridors be eliminated from further consideration at this time. The Town of Garner strongly supports the original protected corridor as illustrated by the Orange Corridor on the 2015 Corridor Public Hearing Maps as the preferred choice for the development and construction of the I-540 Triangle Expressway Southeast Extension. The community has long expected growth along this protected corridor and has planned for it appropriately.

Many land use decisions have been made based upon citizens and community leaders assumptions about the protected corridor and its future use. We respectfully request the North Carolina Department of Transportation's formal and serious consideration of our concerns regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



Ronnie S. Williams
Mayor



Hardin Watkins
Town Manager

cc: Town Council Members